



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

# AFGHANISTAN



- USAID has helped micro, small, and medium-sized Afghan businesses by disbursing more than 58,000 loans worth \$57 million.
- Nearly one million Afghans are treated every month at USAID-supported health facilities; 76% are women and children younger than 5.
- 105,000 students, including 68,000 women and girls, have attended school in remote, isolated areas through a USAID-supported community education program.
- Adult life expectancy has risen by 22 years from 42 years in 2002 to 64 years in 2012.
- USAID has trained 16,000 civil servants, including 4,000 women.

Photo credit: USAID/Afghanistan

## Country Profile

After decades of war, Afghanistan is moving towards a more secure, stable, and prosperous future. With support from the U.S. government, ISAF and the international community, the gains of the last decade have been hard-won, but these advances are tangible and having a direct impact on the lives of many Afghans.

Since 2002, USAID has spent more than \$13 billion on development programs in Afghanistan, and with the support of USAID and other donors, Afghanistan has made significant progress since the fall of the Taliban. Economic growth has averaged 9% per year; 8 million children are enrolled in school, including 2.9 million girls; and 60% of Afghans now live within an hour's walk of health services. Afghans are increasingly optimistic about their future. The Asia Foundation's 2013 Survey of the Afghan People reports 57% of Afghans believe their country is moving in the right direction. Still, significant challenges remain. Half the population lives in poverty, and young Afghans, who make up 65% of the population, are seeking employment and opportunity. More than 7.5 million Afghans are food insecure, and 5.4 million lack access to basic services. For many Afghans, daily life is a struggle, and Afghanistan continues to face a difficult road ahead.

## OUR WORK

Advances in economic growth, health, education, and stability would not have been possible without the support of the American people. As part of this effort, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has focused on building the capacity of the Afghan government, people, private sector, and civil society to take ownership of long-term development and reconstruction efforts. In accordance with international agreements, such as the Strategic Partnership Agreement and the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework, USAID's strategy in Afghanistan focuses on:

- sustainable agriculture-led economic growth expanded,
- gains in health, education, and the empowerment of women maintained and enhanced, and
- performance and legitimacy of the Afghan government improved.

USAID partnership with Afghanistan will extend beyond the 2014 military transition. Sustainability, anti-corruption, and the protection of women's rights will remain vital components of USAID's efforts.

## ECONOMIC GROWTH: AGRICULTURE, ENERGY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE

To promote economic growth led by agriculture, USAID has supported Afghan businessmen and women, strengthened the financial services sector, and supported legal and regulatory reforms that bolster the business environment and attract investment. Today, 75% of Afghans rely on agriculture as a primary source of income. Afghanistan has an excellent reputation for high-value agricultural products, such as almonds, pomegranates, pistachios, raisins, and apricots, and USAID investments help link farmers to national and regional markets, leading to \$52 million in sales since 2010. Reliable electricity and properly maintained roads and bridges provide access to markets, increase mobility and trade, and connect Afghans to basic services, including schools and health clinics. USAID has built or rehabilitated more than 2,000 kilometers of roads since 2002, and 24 percent of Afghans now have access to reliable electricity.

## INVESTING IN PEOPLE: HEALTH AND EDUCATION

USAID works closely with the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) to ensure a sustainable health system and to meet the healthcare needs of the Afghan people, especially women and children. The MoPH, with support from USAID and other donors, has implemented an innovative community health program so Afghans in remote areas can access medical care. This program has demonstrated clear results: in 2002, only 14% of Afghan women in rural areas had access to skilled birth attendants, but by 2012, 46% did. This work has a tangible impact – adult life expectancy has risen by 22 years, under-5 mortality has decreased by 62%, and maternal mortality has dramatically decreased to 327 deaths per 1,000 live births. Since 2002, the Afghan government, USAID, and other partners have trained more than 186,000 teachers, increased primary school enrollment rates to over 50%, and provided 148 million textbooks to Afghan students.

## DEMOCRACY: GOVERNING JUSTLY AND DEMOCRATICALLY

USAID supports citizen participation, more-accountable and transparent governance processes, and strengthened sub-national planning, budgeting, and fiscal management. USAID assistance helps develop the capacity of the Independent Election Commission, National Assembly, and Supreme Court, as well as ministries and institutions of the executive branch, such as the Independent Directorate for Local Governance. It also builds the demand for good governance by helping Afghan civil society effectively advocate for improved governance, transparency, and accountability.

## LOOKING AHEAD: SUSTAINABILITY

Focusing on long-term impact and maintaining the gains of the last decade, USAID works closely with the Afghan government to increase effectiveness, accountability, and transparency; fight corruption; manage budgets; and be responsible stewards of public finances. USAID work with Afghan ministries helped lead to an increase in domestic revenues from \$6.7 million in 2008 to \$1.9 billion in 2013 – a critical step to becoming less donor dependent and more sustainable.

## CONTACTS

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A shopkeeper stands in front of his goods in Kabul.  
Photo credit: USAID Afghanistan



Tending oranges in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan.  
Photo credit: USAID Afghanistan